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SECURITY INFORMATION

Chairman of Advisory Committee on Foreign  
Language Publications  
Chairman of Subcommittee on Exploitation of  
Foreign Language Publications  
Presentation of CIA Viewpoint in Subcommittee Meetings

25 August 1953

1. Per your request the following information on this subject is presented below.

2. The Subcommittee is at present dealing with publications of the USSR and has followed the following points of agenda in discussing this:

a. What current publications should be covered? (news-papers, periodicals, books, other)

b. Which publications and which subjects should receive priority processing?

c. What method(s) of exploitation should be used? (e.g., abstracts, summaries, compilations, annotated bibliographies, special techniques)

d. What method(s) of reporting should be used? (e.g., general press summaries, abstract publications, monthly, quarterly or semiannual collations, spot reports)

e. What part of the effort should be set aside for specific searches in non-current publications and the preparation of comprehensive digests or compilations? What basic projects should be undertaken? In what priority?

f. Should FPD do only straight reporting or would insertion of factual comments be advisable or desirable where appropriate?

g. How can closer liaison between FPD and consumer analysts be developed?

3. CIA's position in regard to each of these points has been presented as follows:

a. Coverage of the provincial and specialized press is needed as well as the widest possible coverage of periodicals and monographs. Of the latter, text books for higher education are especially important.

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b. Economic information is desired from the central press, provincial press and technical publications. No specific subject priorities available at this time. As for political information, specific subject of priority interest is instructions to Communist Party members, especially propagandists and agitators.

c. Prefer straight "extract" reporting, rather than compilations or collations. FDD should provide complete bibliographic treatment of a selected list of periodicals. FDD would thus supplement MLRA (Monthly List of Russian Accessions of Library of Congress) for these purposes. Newspapers should be exploited only on a summary basis but "by-lines" exploited for biographic and topical information.

d. CIA would primarily like extracts and abstracts with collations only against occasional specific needs.

e. CIA agrees in general that the primary effort should be devoted to current publications. However, CIA has a critical need for quantitative data in some fields which can be satisfied only with some basic study.

f. FDD should insert factual comments where appropriate, but should clearly label them as such.

g. CIA representative spoke only for ORR and said that it would investigate the feasibility of an expansion or continuation of the "seminars" between ORR and FDD.

4. In reviewing the above, I seriously wonder whether these statements represent a true picture of what all CIA offices want from foreign publications. FDD's experience with various consumers has shown a continuing trend toward compilations and away from spot extracts. This has been verified in committee meetings by the other agencies who are in marked opposition to CIA on this point. CIA has also failed to indicate its recommendations for priorities subject-wise. Although I recognize that this is a difficult thing to do, the Subcommittee will have to come up with an answer on this and the CIA representative is going to be in a disadvantageous position when this is determined at the next meeting.

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